

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 02381 280916Z

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

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UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 2381

E.O. ZQYTWC N/A

TAGS: SREF, UNHCR, ICRC, MR, MO, AG

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN CITIZENS IN ALGERIA

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 2323

1. MAURITANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAMDY OULD MOUKNASS COMMENTED ON QUESTION OF MAURITANIAN CITIZENS IN ALGERIA JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR UNGA ON SEPT 25. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS ACCOUNTS, MOUKNASS SAID " CERTAIN OF OUR COMPATRIOTS HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED BY MERCENARIES SENT BY ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT," THESE CITIZENS ARE NOW LIVING IN "ALGERIAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS". MOUKNASS RECALLED THAT PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH AND KING HUSSAN HAD ISSUED APPEAL TO VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE IN REPATRIATING MAURITANIWF AND MOROCCAN CITIZENS "CONFINED" IN TINDOUF REGION BY ALGERIAN LEADERS. MOUKNASS EXPLAINED THAT THIS APPEAL OPENS THE WAY FOR IDEAL SOLUTION WHICH OUGHT TO PLEASE EVERYONE. WHERE THESE NATIONALS ARE CONSIDERED REFUGEES, MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA ARE READY TO WELCOME THEM AND WILL OFFER ALL NECESSARY GUARANTEES TO THESE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF THESE PEOPLE IN THE NORMAL LIFE OF TWO RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES. MOUKNASS ADDED, "WHERE CERTAIN OF THESE NATIONALS CONSIDER THEMSELVES AS MERCENARIES IN THE SERVICE OF THE ALGERIAN

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PAGE 02 NOUAKC 02381 280916Z

LEADERS, THEN THE PROBLEM BECOMES POLITICAL". IN LAT-

TER CASE, MOUKNASS SAID INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DO NOT HAVE A MANDATE TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN SUCH POLITICAL ISSUES.

2. MOUKNASS CLAIMED THAT APPEAL BY PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH AND KING HASSAN TO INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATIONS HAS BEEN MET WITH FAVORABLE RESPONSE. HE SAID GIRM IS IN CONTACT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF RED CROSS AND LEAGUE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES (REFTEL). MOUKNASS EMPHASIZED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS, WHEN THEY VISIT TINDOUF, "WILL SEE THE EXTREMELY INJURIOUS ROLE THAT ALGERIA IS PLAYING IN THE REGION". MOUKNASS CONCLUDED THAT HE WILL BE IN CONTACT WITH SECRETARY GENERAL OF UN AND HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES ON THIS SUBJECT.

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